

### **Annual Evaluation of the Commissioner of Education**

In its employment contract with the Commissioner (attached as Appendix 1), KBE has agreed to the following:

The Board shall evaluate and assess in writing the performance of the Commissioner at least once a year during the term of this Agreement. This evaluation and assessment shall be reasonably related to the description of the Commissioner's duties and responsibilities, and the goals and objectives of the Board for the year in question. ... In the event that the Board determines that the performance of the Commissioner is unsatisfactory in any respect, the Board shall describe in writing, in reasonable detail, specific instances of unsatisfactory performance. The evaluation shall include recommendations as to areas of improvement in all instances where the Board deems performance to be unsatisfactory.

As a preliminary step in the Board's evaluation, it has been Commissioner Wilhoit's voluntary practice to prepare an annual memorandum evaluating his own performance and commenting on matters he considers relevant to the evaluation. To continue and enhance this process, this evaluation form consists of two parts:

**Part A: Specific Issues and Board Priorities** – provides summary information regarding (1) the specific issues noted during the 2004 evaluation and (2) other priorities contained in the Board's Strategic Plan, and requests Board member comments regarding the Commissioner's performance for those issues.

**Part B: Critical Task Assessment** – presents individual performance indicators and requests that Board members rate the Commissioner's performance for each "Critical Task" and provide general comments about the Commissioner's overall performance (including any responses to the Commissioner's self-assessment memorandum).

Accordingly, attached are:

- Commissioner Wilhoit's 2005 Self-Assessment Memorandum to the Board
- Evaluation Form Part A – Specific Issues and Board Priorities
- Evaluation Form Part B – Critical Task Assessment
- Appendix 1: Commissioner Wilhoit's Employment Contract
- Appendix 2: 2004 Evaluation by the Kentucky Board of Education

The last page contains extra space for comments and for you to describe any issue you would like to see included in next year's evaluation. Please complete the evaluation form and return it to \_\_\_\_\_ in the attached envelope by \_\_\_\_\_. Your evaluation will be used to help guide our discussion about the Commissioner's performance.

**Evaluation Form Part A – Specific Issues and Board Priorities**

**Completed by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I. 2004 Evaluation Issues**

The Board's October 7, 2004 written evaluation, memorializing the contents of an annual review discussed in executive session with Commissioner Wilhoit on August 12, 2004, is attached as Appendix 2. Pertinent parts of that evaluation include (italics added):

Nonetheless, in our efforts to focus on student achievement, *we encourage you to develop a plan for future staff reductions, and ways to cut costs, in the event that such a step becomes necessary.* Further, while your personal communication skills are exemplary, *we urge you to emphasize to staff that consistency in the responses provided to questions from the field is essential and critical.* We also believe *it would be beneficial to expand the group of people and/or groups to whom you listen, and alternate where possible, the superintendents with whom you consult.* Lastly, with regard to opportunities for growth, in advancing the interests of public education, *it is important that you emphasize positive results in student achievement, school progress, and department initiatives at every opportunity.*

For the coming year, we see many challenges before you, including advancing the Seven Steps Forward In Assessment; developing and implementing your plan to improve student learning in Kentucky secondary schools; creating innovative and effective ways to improve the health of the students in our schools; rebuilding the technology infrastructure in our schools so that Kentucky students have the tools to succeed; maintaining existing partnerships and striving to establish new ones with people and groups that can help us achieve our goals; and, leveraging resources whenever and wherever possible. Finally, through all your work in the coming year, we expect that you will continue to emphasize diversity in its broadest sense.

**How do you evaluate the Commissioner's performance concerning these issues?**

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## II. Strategic Plan and Other Board Priorities

The Board has established the following Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives, many of which require implementation or some form of involvement or monitoring by the Department.

## Goal 1: High Student Performance

**Objective 1.1: Every student in school and making strong progress**

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) is addressing all objectives through focused and coordinated initiatives. Special emphasis has been placed on dropout reduction and reducing performance gaps among subgroups of students to meet requirements adopted by the General Assembly in 2002 (Senate Bill 168).

**Objective 1.2: Every student achieving at high levels**

KDE is addressing all objectives through work plans developed during 2001 and revised in 2003-2004. KDE continues to maintain high performance standards for students, teachers, schools and districts, to measure performance against those standards and provide targeted help to those most in need. Highly skilled educators assist the lowest

performing schools. Other staff work with districts to identify needs and provide or arrange for assistance.

**Objective 1.3: Every student reading at or above proficient**

Emphasis has been placed on literacy at all levels. Each school is expected to develop and implement a comprehensive literacy plan. Standards for school literacy efforts have been developed, and literacy program funds have been directed to schools with the largest numbers of readers not meeting CATS standards. Reading First will be implemented in 2003-2004 and beyond

**Objective 1.4: Every KDE employee working to enhance student success**

KDE is addressing all objectives through work plans developed during 2001 and revised in 2003-2004. Particular emphasis has been given to redirecting KDE resources (staff and grant dollars) to addressing Kentucky Board of Education priorities and needs identified by advisory groups of superintendents, principals, parents and local school board members. A major joint initiative with the Education Professional Standards Board is the enterprise data system (Max) directed by the General Assembly in 2000.

**Objective 1.5: Every school accountable for student learning**

The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 (as amended) and regulations adopted by the Kentucky Board of Education have established a school and district accountability system that sets biennial and long-range school improvement targets as measured by student performance on various measures.

**Objective 1.6: Every graduate ready for postsecondary education and/or work**

To improve both college and job readiness for high school graduates, KDE is (1) working with high schools, Kentucky Virtual High School (KVHS) and other partners to provide opportunities for students in every high school to take Advanced Placement and dual credit classes, (2) expanding the scope of occupational skill standards certification, and (3) working to establish by 2006 a requirement that all graduates demonstrate basic technology skills.

**How do you evaluate the Commissioner's performance concerning these issues?**

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## **Goal 2: High Quality Teaching and Administration**

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### **Objective 2.1: Every teacher competent, caring and qualified**

The Kentucky Department of Education in partnership with the Education Professional Standards Board, teacher preparation institutions, regional cooperatives and local school districts is working actively to increase the number of certified teachers, increase on-the-job support for teachers early in their careers and provide effective professional development.

### **Objective 2.2: Every principal an instructional leader**

Since 2001-2002, KDE has provided a network of mentor coaches to support principals in schools below the assistance line (not meeting goals) during the 2000-2002 interim accountability cycle. KDE will continue to assist principals in the lowest performing schools based on CATS results and scholastic audits. The focus is on the leadership standard (Standard 7) in the *Kentucky Standards and Indicators for School Improvement*. The principals will be supported by highly skilled educators in their efforts to meet the standards.

### **Objective 2.3: Every school an equitable place to work and learn**

Based on a review of 2000-2002 results from scholastic audits and comments from the field, KDE has redirected its efforts toward providing intensive services that support an equitable, supportive learning environment for teaching and learning, according to Standards 4-5: School Climate indicators in the *Kentucky Standards and Indicators for School Improvement*. Initiatives in this area include the Minority Student Achievement project, work with the Commissioner's Equity Council and General Assembly on closing achievement gaps (Senate Bill 168) and minority recruitment and retention.

### **Objective 2.4: Every local district supportive of teachers and students**

KDE has several initiatives in place to help leadership at the district and school levels focus more effectively on improving student achievement. The *Kentucky Standards and Indicators for School Improvement* include standards for district in supporting schools, and district used this for developing comprehensive district improvement plans for 2002-2004 and subsequent years. A district scholastic audit process has been piloted. Increased attention is being given to the role of districts in school improvement. The initiatives are in preparation for district accountability requirements, effective 2004-2005.

**How do you evaluate the Commissioner's performance concerning these issues?**

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### **Goal 3: Strong and Supportive Environment for Each School and Every Child**

#### **Objective 3.1: Every child and teacher in a safe and caring environment**

Working with local districts and other partners, KDE provides a variety of resources for improving attendance, increasing student and teacher safety, ensuring compliance with student health standards, increasing participation for eligible students in breakfast and lunch programs, and providing safe buildings. KDE, with assistance from other partners including the Department of Public Health, state universities, and the Cabinet for Families and Children, has drafted a Comprehensive Plan for Coordinated School Health. This plan focuses on teaching and modeling health lifestyles for children and youth involving parents and citizens, state and local education agencies, and state and local public health agencies.

#### **Objective 3.2: Every child who is behind receiving increased supports**

In 2001-2002, KDE provided schools and districts with a variety of assessment strategies and tools, including reading instruments, that schools and districts may use to keep track of student progress so that struggling students are identified quickly and receive effective help immediately. KDE provides targeted resources to schools to help them meet both academic and non-academic needs of students.

#### **Objective 3.3: Every school with sufficient instructional resources for high achievement**

KDE's historic statutory role has been to distribute state and federal funds to districts and schools fairly and equitably. KDE has conducted studies concerning the adequacy of funding to support KERA, including Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) and other programs. In addition, in conjunction with partners and the General Assembly under Senate Bill 402, a small number of districts are participating in a pilot on differentiated compensation for teachers. The impact of these programs is being evaluated by third party compensation specialists.

#### **Objective 3.4: Every family involved in their child's learning**

KDE's focus is on increasing schools' positive contacts with parents, more parent participation in School Based Decision Making (SBDM), and parents and schools

working as partners on behalf of the child through increased participation in parent-teacher conferences and the development of individual graduation plans.

**Objective 3.5: Every community involved in children's learning**

KDE's action plans focus on extending community education efforts, expanding community literacy initiatives and increasing job-based learning opportunities for students.

**How do you evaluate the Commissioner's performance concerning these issues?**

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**Do you have any other comments concerning the Board's Priorities:**

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**Annual Evaluation of the Commissioner of Education**  
**Part B – Individual Performance Indicators**

**Completed by:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide your evaluation for **each of the following items**, using the scale listed below.

- 5 = Outstanding.** Performance is always or almost always tremendous.  
**4 = Good.** Performance generally is impressive and does the job well.  
**3 = Adequate.** Performance is satisfactory but improvement is desirable.  
**2 = Inadequate.** Inconsistent performance; sometimes does not meet expectations or needs.  
**1 = Unsatisfactory.** Performs poorly or not at all; unacceptable.

Critical Task Area	Please circle
1. Provides State leadership and supervision of elementary and secondary education	<div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div>
<p>Possible considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibits extensive knowledge of educational policies and practices</li> <li>• Articulates a clear vision for K-12 public education</li> <li>• Advises the Board, the Executive Branch and the legislature as to K-12 financial needs</li> <li>• Promotes high academic achievement by students, schools, school systems and the State</li> <li>• Develops strong programs using research and best practices</li> <li>• Provides leadership and Department collaboration for P-16 issues</li> <li>• Attracts additional resources (grant and foundation money) for KDE programs</li> </ul> <p>Remarks:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	



2. Supervises and manages the Kentucky Department of Education	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Possible considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruits excellent staff</li> <li>• Appears to promote high morale and a positive work environment</li> <li>• Appears to delegate responsibility effectively</li> <li>• Adheres to objectives and timelines of priority items</li> <li>• Develops Departmental education budget effectively</li> <li>• Practices sound fiscal management of KDE operations</li> <li>• Implements and enforces KBE regulations, state and federal statutes</li> <li>• Evaluates programs and performance of the Department effectively</li> </ul> <p>Remarks:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>					

3. Maintains an excellent relationship with KBE	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Possible considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicates openly and keeps members well-informed</li> <li>• Develops effective Board agendas with Board officers</li> <li>• Provides the Board with sufficient and clear information and guidance so as to facilitate Board decisions</li> <li>• Implements goals, policies and directives of the Board</li> <li>• Responds to individual Board concerns appropriately</li> </ul> <p>Remarks:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>					

4. Establishes excellent relationships with key people and groups	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Possible considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor and Executive Branch</li> <li>• General Assembly</li> <li>• Local school districts</li> <li>• Business, community and education advocacy groups</li> <li>• Media and general public</li> <li>• Parent groups</li> <li>• Others (please list):</li> </ul>					
<p>Remarks:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>					

5. Demonstrates essential personal and professional attributes	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Possible considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High standards of integrity and competence</li> <li>• Ability to inspire and lead</li> <li>• Oral and written communication skills</li> <li>• Strong work ethic</li> <li>• Timely and reliable accomplishments</li> <li>• Courteous and accessible</li> </ul>					
<p>Remarks:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>					

Please provide any general comments or praise or opportunities for improvement, or remarks concerning the Commissioner's self-assessment memorandum:

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Are there issues you would like to see included in next year's evaluation?

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